



Project Profile Youth Education



Mono Basin Stewardship Project

The Mono Basin Stewardship Project addresses multiple resource needs of the creeks, the lakeshore, and watershed lands of the Mono Basin. The streams that fed Mono Lake were diverted for municipal use by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power beginning in 1941 causing the lake to lose half its volume and double in salinity which threatened the survival of the once productive ecosystem that sustained millions of migrating birds and a thriving fishery. To assist in restoration efforts which help the riparian and lakeshore recover from previous damage and maintain land and water resources in light of increased visitation, this project is focused on restoration, monitoring, education, interpretation and other visitor services.

A vital component to this multi-faceted project is the educational and stewardship youth engagement effort which includes not only groups from the region's elementary and high schools but also involves youth from Los Angeles. Youth from southern California spend a week living in the High Sierra and connecting with this unique part of their source of water. They participate in science and hands-on learning restoration work which includes tasks such as planting native trees along Rush Creek, removing invasive plants along Lee Vining Creek and doing trail maintenance. Conservation, restoration, and stewardship continue to be the main emphasis of the program which teaches participants about natural and urban watersheds and the many ways human activity can impact them, both negatively and positively.

Partners in this collaborative project include the Mono Lake Committee, Inyo National Forest and a regional non-profit, Friends of the Inyo; each have contributed funds, in-kind services, supplies and equipment to this endeavor.